

Climate Care press information

Who is Climate Care?

Climate Care is an organisation that sells carbon offsets. It tackles climate change on behalf of individuals and businesses by funding projects that avoid, reduce or absorb greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide (CO₂).

What is carbon offsetting?

Many human activities contribute to climate change. Flying, driving, heating and powering our homes and workplaces all burn fossil fuels and this releases greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide (CO₂) into the atmosphere.

For a small payment, Climate Care will reduce an amount of CO₂ equivalent to that which your activity releases – “carbon offsetting”.

Offsetting your ‘carbon footprint’ complements efforts to reduce it. It is a key tool for building carbon-responsibility into everyday life.

Our history

- Climate Care was founded in 1998 by eco-entrepreneur Mike Mason. Since then, Mike has gone on to set up businesses in renewable energy in the UK.
- Our approach has been guided by an Environmental Steering Committee, which includes environmental experts and representatives from environmental NGOs:
 - Sir Crispin Tickell (Chair)
 - David Aeron-Thomas (Forum for the Future)
 - Kirsty Clough (WWF)
 - Professor Jeff Burley (former head of the Oxford Forestry Institute)
 - John Ashton (Foreign Secretary’s Special Representative for Climate Change)
 - Dr Steve Cobb (Environment and Development Group)
- The company is not a charity since the founders felt that the role of reducing pollution is not a charitable role; rather it is a service. Climate Care is a company limited by guarantee and has no shareholders.

Our projects

Climate Care offsets emissions through a range of projects. These can be in:

- Renewable energy – this replaces non-renewable fuel such as coal
- Energy efficiency – this reduces the amount of fuel needed
- Forest restoration – this absorbs CO₂ from the atmosphere as the trees grow

Some examples of our projects follow.



Efficient stoves in Honduras

Our project is working in Honduras to make fuel efficient cooking stoves available in some of the poorest communities. This supports conservation by reducing the wood needed for cooking. It also benefits the householders by removing smoke from the kitchen and dramatically cutting the health risk from wood smoke.

Each stove reduces carbon dioxide emissions by around 1.5 tonnes per year, compared to an open wood fire. The project is expected to save 7,000 tonnes of CO₂.

That's equivalent to taking over 2000 cars off the road for a year.



Renewable power for schools in India

We are funding a project to introduce school stoves that run off a new renewable fuel source, replacing stoves that use fossil fuel LPG. Crop waste is being used to make biomass briquettes for the stoves, providing an extra income to farmers. For the schools this is good news because the new renewable fuel is cheaper. The stove has also proved popular with pupils, who prefer the taste of the food!

This project is expected to save 11,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions.

That's equivalent to 7,000 fewer return trips from London to New York.



Restoring Rainforests in Uganda

We are funding part of a forest restoration programme in the Kibale National Park in Uganda. The project aims to re-create a rainforest canopy by planting and managing 30 species of local trees. The area is an important wildlife habitat – with one of the highest number of primate species in the world - and the project provides employment for local communities.

Each hectare of rainforest that is restored is expected to absorb 400 tonnes of CO₂.

That's equivalent to the annual emissions from 80 average sized UK homes.

Each of our projects undergoes a process to monitor and verify the CO₂ reductions we make from them. This is done by an independent third party.

UK projects

We do not run projects in the UK or other countries with a legally binding international Kyoto target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

If we did, the CO₂ reductions we made would be counted towards the government's Kyoto targets. Our approach means that we make extra CO₂ reductions to what has already been committed to across the world.

All of our projects are overseas in the developing world, where there are no legal obligations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

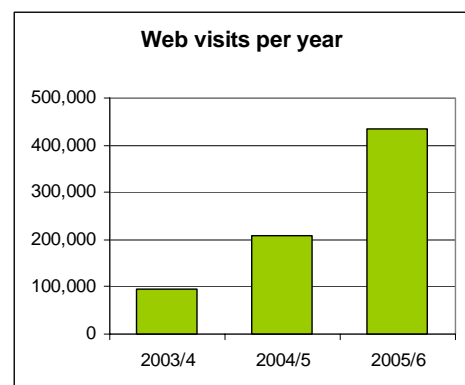
Who buys carbon offsets?

Individuals

People can work out and offset their CO₂ emissions online at www.climatecare.org, which has carbon calculators for home energy use, driving and flights.

Each year, visits to our website have increased, as shown.

Offsetting is currently not that expensive, relative to the cost of the activities that produce the CO₂. For example to offset **a single return trip to Alicante** in Spain (which creates 0.33 tonnes CO₂) costs £2.50 with Climate Care.



Business

We work with over 100 businesses that offset emissions from many sources, including:

- Air Travel
- Day-to-day operations
- Events
- Products and Services

A full list of people we work with can be found on the For Business section of www.climatecare.org. Companies we work with include Business in the Community, The Co-operative Bank, Interface Europe *Cool Carpet*, What Car?

Travel companies

We partner with a number of travel companies who offer their customers the chance to offset the emissions from their flights.

Our travel partners include:

- British Airways
- Explore Worldwide
- Lonely Planet and Rough Guides
- ResponsibleTravel.com

Some organisations we work with:



Vital statistics

Business & Sales:

- Our turnover has doubled year on year and in 2005 totalled £568,000.
- In 2005, we sold 99,000 tonnes of CO₂ offsets.
- 84% of Climate Care's online carbon offset sales was for air travel.
- The number of carbon offset sales from individuals increased more than tenfold since the beginning of 2005.
- 70% of our offsets are sold through our business partners and 30% through individuals using our on line calculators.

Projects:

- 80% of our CO₂ reductions are made in sustainable energy projects; renewable energy or energy efficiency.
- In 2005, 60% of our expenditure went to projects.

Climate change:

In just 200 years, the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere – the major gas that causes climate change – has increased by 30 per cent. climatechallenge.gov.uk

Concentrations of greenhouse gases are now higher than at any point in the past 800,000 years. climatechallenge.gov.uk

Over the past century, average near-surface global temperatures have risen by 0.7°C. climatechallenge.gov.uk

The ten warmest years on record have all been since 1990. Six of the ten warmest years on record in the UK were between 1995 and 2004. climatechallenge.gov.uk

In Europe, the August 2003 heatwave was probably the hottest for at least 500 years. climatechallenge.gov.uk

During August 2003, the hottest temperature ever recorded in the UK was taken in Brogdale in Kent. It was 38.5°C. climatechallenge.gov.uk

Between 4 and 13 August 2003, over 2,000 people in the UK died as a result of the heat. climatechallenge.gov.uk

The autumn and winter floods in 2000 in the UK were the worst for 270 years in some areas. Flooding on farmland cost the farming industry nearly £500 million. climatechallenge.gov.uk

Most of the world's endangered species -- some 25 percent of mammals and 12 percent of birds -- may become extinct over the next few decades as warmer conditions alter the forests, wetlands, and rangelands they depend on, and human development blocks them from migrating elsewhere. *UN Framework Convention on Climate Change*.

The UK government's chief scientist Professor Sir David King warned The Earth is likely to experience a temperature rise of at least 3C putting 400 million more people at risk of hunger, destroy major forest systems and wreck half the world's wildlife reserves. news.bbc.co.uk

Annual losses from the three major storm types affecting insurance markets could increase by two thirds to \$27 bn by 2080. *The Financial Risks of Climate Change, Association of British Insurers*

Climate Care – exploding some myths

Myth 1: “Carbon offsetting means planting trees”

When carbon offsets began, tree planting was the main way that people offset emissions. These days, best practise in carbon offsetting is generally considered to be investing in sustainable energy projects that cut emissions in the first place – such as renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Climate Care was the first carbon offset organisation in the UK to take this approach. Currently 80% of our carbon reductions are made in sustainable energy projects.

We still make 20% of our CO₂ reductions through a forest restoration project. This is because globally, around 20% of greenhouse gas emissions are through deforestation or forest fires.

Myth 2: “Carbon offset tree-planting projects lead to monocultures and have negative impacts on local communities”

Climate Care has one high-quality forest restoration project in Uganda. This is replanting 30 indigenous species of tree in order to restore a rainforest canopy in Kibale National Park. This allows the natural ecosystem of the existing forest to recover, and expand into the newly replanted areas.

The forest will absorb CO₂ from the atmosphere as it grows. The projects also provides employment for up to 400 local people and helps boost eco-tourism in the area.

The project is also supporting conservation by recreating habitat for wildlife. The area has one of the highest number of primate species in the world.

Myth 3: “Carbon offsetting doesn’t make a difference to climate change”

To tackle climate change we need to make deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions around the world. Carbon offsetting through Climate Care makes **real** greenhouse gas reductions that would not have happened otherwise. It also helps people to quantify and understand better the impacts of their activities on the climate.

Myth 4: “Carbon offsetting just gives people an excuse to carry on polluting when they should be changing their behaviour.”

We are not aware of any evidence to suggest that offsetting their emissions means that people are less likely to take other measures to reduce their emissions. In fact, in our experience carbon offsetting is often part of a mixture of measures that people take to reduce their impact on the climate.

As an example, in a recent survey of our online customers, over 90% had done one or more of the following to reduce their ‘carbon footprint’: made their home more energy efficient, switched to green electricity, driven less, flown less.

Furthermore, four out of five of those surveyed said it was the first time they had measured their carbon emissions, and the same proportion agreed that our website calculators had “increased my understanding of my own impact on climate change”.

Further information

2005 Annual Report: this can be downloaded from the ‘About Us’ section of our website (www.climatecare.org), or contact us for a hard copy.

For further information, please contact:

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